

around certain centers, and moving upwards collect to form the cysts attached to the cystophore, which is largely made up of hardened secretion. The rods in the cysts may retain their simple vegetative character or they may form spores (*Myxococcus*).

Zukal thinks it probable that a motile stage similar to the myxamoeba stage of *Myxomycetes* follows the germination of the cysts. Thaxter has followed the germination of the cysts in detail. "The mass of rods thus freed begins at once to vegetate, the individuals dividing rapidly and entering upon a new period of activity."

Zukal, in spite of the simplicity of the plasmodium without nuclei and only made up of granular matter (*microsomata*), thinks the form of fructification sufficiently like some higher fungi (for example *Botrytis*) to hint a possible evolution of such forms from certain low types. Such evolution is to come about through epigenetic development embodying Lamarckian factors in an extreme form.

Thaxter sees in the structure and development of the rods undoubted schizomycete characters which clearly place the *Myxobacteriaceæ* in that group of plants. But while the rods are individuals they nevertheless act together in a remarkable manner, under certain conditions, to form a fructification resembling in superficial features certain filamentous fungi. The pseudo-plasmodium of the *Myxobacteriaceæ* has a certain similarity to the plasmodium of *Myxomycetes* but the cytological differences are enormous.

"In view of such important differences, the writer (Dr. Thaxter) would hesitate to assume even a remote genetic connection between two groups on a basis of resemblance which might well be purely accidental."

Perhaps in this connection it may not be out of place to inquire of Migula where he puts the *Myxobacteriaceæ*. No mention is made of the group in his account of the *Schizomycetes* to be found in *Die Natürliche Pflanzenfamilien*. — BRADLEY MOORE DAVIS, *University of Chicago*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HYPOXIS.

To the Editors of the Botanical Gazette:—I have examined with interest the article of Mr. Holm in the February number of the *GAZETTE* on *Hypoxis hirsuta*, the original presentation of which I had the pleasure of listening to at the Biological Society of Washington a few months since. The article contains one feature which though essentially unimportant may, however, be misleading to some of your readers. I refer to the statement that the name *Ornithogalum hirsutum* of Linnaeus is a *nomen nudum*, that is, a name which was never really published and which therefore is without standing in nomenclature. The evidence that Linnaeus' name was not a *nomen nudum* is contained in Mr. Holm's article; indeed, one could scarcely have secured

more conclusive evidence had that been the primary object of an exhaustive bibliographical research. It seems that before Linnaeus' work appeared, the plant he called *Ornithogalum hirsutum* had been described and in some cases figured by at least six different authors, and that four of these descriptions and two of the figures Linnaeus cited when he published the name. This constitutes as clear a case of actual publication as it is possible to have, and by a method which has been practiced by botanists everywhere and at all times. All the species in Linnaeus' *Species Plantarum* were published in essentially the same manner. If one were to publish a statement of the main facts in the life of George Washington, citing the dates of his birth and death, the battles in which he was engaged, and the official records of his actions while president, and should conclude "therefore, in view of these facts, it is evident that George Washington is a myth," he would not be drawing a more erroneous conclusion than Mr. Holm when he says that *Ornithogalum hirsutum* is a *nomen nudum*.

If *Ornithogalum hirsutum* L. is not a *nomen nudum*, not only is it permissible to retain the specific name when the plant is transferred to the genus *Hypoxis*, but under the rules it is mandatory to do so. It should be noted further that when Linnaeus in the second edition of the *Species Plantarum* placed this plant in *Hypoxis*, he cited first the *Ornithogalum hirsutum* of the earlier edition, followed by the same four citations he had used under that name, and no others.—FREDERICK V. COVILLE, *Washington, D. C.*

THE TROPICAL LABORATORY COMMISSION.

To the Editors of the Botanical Gazette:—The editorial reference to the finality of the decision of the tropical laboratory commission in the GAZETTE for February renders it proper to say that the commission is most willingly amenable to advice and suggestions and will welcome any assistance which will enable it to perform the duties it has undertaken, to the best advantage of all botanical interests. It may prevent misconceptions of the status of the commission and of the proposed laboratory, however, to state that the commission is a technically independent body, and that its decisions and action are not subject to revision by any existing organization, botanical or otherwise.

The recent absence of the writer from his address and the extended delays in Atlantic mails will make it impossible to announce the foreign membership before the tour of exploration begins.

In the course of the correspondence concerning the matter, letters have been received from a large number of botanists who have visited equatorial America. The following extract from a letter from Professor Goebel is a fair index of opinion concerning the nature and value of the proposed station:
. . . . "and without doubt it (the tropical laboratory) will be of the very